

REMARKS

For your consideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Initially, applicants note that returned with the outstanding Office Action were two forms PTO-1449 based on previously filed Information Disclosure Statements (IDSs). With respect to the IDS filed May 2, 2003 the returned form PTO-1449 apparently inadvertently did not initial reference AW noted in the "Other References" section, the reference being indicated as "Agent TV". Applicants respectfully request that a new form PTO-1449 be returned properly acknowledging consideration of that reference AW.

Claims 1-25 are pending in this application. Claims 1-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. patent 6,442,538 to Nojima et al.¹

Addressing the rejection based on Nojima, that rejection is obviated by the present response.

The present application is based on Japanese priority document 10-372746 filed in Japan on December 28, 1998. Nojima was filed in the U.S. Patent Office on May 24, 1999. Thereby, applicants' priority date pre-dates the filing date of Nojima.

Filed with the present response is a translation of applicants' priority document perfecting applicants' priority date of December 28, 1998, for the present application. That perfected priority date thereby removes Nojima as a valid reference against the claims, and thereby obviates the only outstanding rejection.

¹ In paragraph 2 of the Office Action an incorrect patent number is noted for Nojima.

As no other rejections are pending in this application, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.


Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

EHK:SNS\dt

I:\ATTY\SNS\0039\00397484\00397484.AM1.DOC



Eckhard H. Kuesters
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 28,870

Surinder Sachar
Registration No. 34,423